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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord our God, grant Your servants patience and perseverance.

Patience calms the soul within.

Perseverance reaches beyond oneself to accomplish the task at hand.

Humbled by our own frailty and sometimes overwhelmed by the expectations laid upon us, we need Your mighty assistance.

Unsure which comes first, perseverance or patience, touch each Member of this House personally that all may contribute to the ways of freedom and the work of justice.

May virtue flourish here that all may see that by helping others to persevere

we find the strength and purpose to persevere ourselves; for we are Your servants, both now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) come for-

ward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GINGREY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches on each side.

ST. URSULA BULLDOGS WIN OHIO STATE VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

NOTICE

If the 108th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before November 23, 2003, a final issue of the Congressional Record for the 108th Congress, 1st Session, will be published on Monday, December 15, 2003, in order to permit Members to revise and extend their remarks.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

ROBERT W. NEY, *Chairman*.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to recognize the achievement of an exceptional group of young women in my Cincinnati congressional district, the St. Ursula Bulldogs volleyball team.

St. Ursula battled Ursuline Academy, another outstanding Cincinnati school, for Ohio's State volleyball championship. St. Ursula emerged victorious, capping off an undefeated season. With 29 wins and zero losses. St. Ursula was also declared national champion.

The victory marked St. Ursula's eighth State volleyball title, making it the only Ohio school to accomplish this feat in history.

Mr. Speaker, these are two excellent schools academically as well as in sports. They have faced each other three straight years for the State title. They are shining examples of what can be accomplished with hard work, perseverance, and teamwork.

It gives me great pleasure, especially since my niece, Maria, is a student at St. Ursula, to acknowledge in the United States Congress the success and achievement of these exceptional young women and their coaches, St. Ursula's Julie Perry and Ursuline's Amie Meyer.

Congratulations.

MEDICARE CONFERENCE REPORT'S RURAL PACKAGE

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rural package provided for in the House-Senate Medicare agreement. The package corrects existing inequities for rural and small town hospitals and providers by equalizing the disproportionate reimbursement payments they have been experiencing in the past.

Rural hospitals' base payment rate will be permanently extended by 1.6 percent to match the urban hospital payment rate and the amount of disproportionate share payments will be more than doubled to 12 percent of total Medicare inpatient payments.

The bill additionally pays cost plus 1 percent to the Critical Access Hospitals to ensure that they can improve access and services.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly the purpose of the rural package: To provide immediate help to rural area and small city hospitals so that they can provide sustained access and quality service to their patients.

Our seniors deserve nothing less than that, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of our Nation's rural hospitals. Pass the Medicare conference report.

CONGRESS COULD DO BETTER FOR SENIORS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today the House will take up an incredibly complicated \$400 million bill which purports to provide seniors something they need: help in buying pharmaceuticals. We could do this more simply and more cost effectively. We could have the government negotiate lower drug prices on behalf of seniors as they do for the Veterans' Administration, a minimum of a 24-percent reduction for veterans' drugs and actually an average of about 50 percent.

There is a bigger group of Medicare people. We could do better. It would not cost anything.

We could also allow the free reimportation of FDA-approved, U.S.-certified, U.S.-manufactured drugs from Canada and other countries. Many seniors in my district are doing that now, saving an average of 50 percent. But, no. Instead, this bill is going to prohibit the reimportation. This bill is going to prohibit the government from negotiating lower prices for pharmaceuticals, all to protect the profits of the pharmaceutical industry at a time when many seniors cannot afford the drugs they need to maintain their health.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S SPEECH IN LONDON

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week President George W. Bush gave an inspiring speech at Whitehall in London, while visiting the Royal Family and Prime Minister Tony Blair. The President stated clearly that the United States is committed to winning the war on terrorism.

In one of the most important moments of the speech, President Bush explains why we cannot forget September the 11th and the innocent thousands that were killed that day. The President said, "The hope that danger has passed is comforting, it is understandable, and it is false. The attacks that followed on Bali, Jakarta, Casa Blanca, Bombay, Mombassa, Najaf, Jerusalem, Riyadh, Baghdad and Istanbul were not dreams. They're part of the global campaign by terrorist networks to intimidate and demoralize those who oppose them."

The President is absolutely correct and I encourage all Americans to remember the act of war brought upon our Nation just 2 years ago. I have confidence that our military will win the global war on terror and I commend the dozens of coalition countries that have joined us in this fight for freedom.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, may God bless our troops.

BUSINESS WILL NOT ALLOW GOVERNMENT TO OPERATE LIKE A BUSINESS

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, very often when we go out and hold town hall meetings, people stand up in the town hall and say: Congressman, why do you not run the government more like a business?

The answer is when we try to run the government like a business, business won't let us.

If one is a Wal-Mart, they negotiate their pharmaceutical prices. They negotiate the prices of goods sold in their store.

In one is a COSTCO, they negotiate pharmaceutical prices and people go to COSTCO to buy their pharmaceuticals.

But if the government wants to negotiate the prices as the largest purchaser of pharmaceuticals in the world, we will not be allowed to because the Republican bill prohibits the Secretary of Health and Human Services from negotiating a better price for America's seniors and American families.

We cannot run the Congress like a business when the businesses are all lobbying to keep a monopoly, to keep high prices, to keep people from going to Canada and getting FDA-approved drugs. That is what suppliers do. People go where there are lower prices. They can search the world over in the globalized economy for lower prices. But American seniors who need life-saving drugs cannot search the world over for lower prices like the businesses can, because business will not let government run the government like a business.

JOBS AND GROWTH PACKAGE REAPING BENEFITS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

(Mr. SHUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it has become apparent that the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Package passed by Congress earlier this year has helped fuel the recent surge in the economy. The American economy grew at a rapid pace of 7.2 percent during the third quarter of this year, the best since 1984.

The seeds of economic growth are beginning to take hold. Our economy is rebounding. We have created strong economic policy built on a foundation of tax relief. The jobs and growth package that Congress passed has been responsible for putting taxpayers' hard earned dollars back in their own pockets.

This week we further our focus on jobs by passing an important comprehensive energy package and we will have an opportunity to strengthen our health care system by passing an important Medicare prescription drug bill